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## AMERICAN ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

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## JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

John G. Whittier's deep interest in the cause of peace and his long connection with the American Peace Society, as one of its Vice-Presidents, justify and call for further mention of him in our columns than the simple notice of his death found in the last number of the *ADVOCATE*. The writer read in Paris the notice of the poet's death, the day after it occurred, and experienced at once, in a land of strangers, the feeling of loss that had come to all Americans, and in fact to all English-speaking people, and, in a wider sense, to the world. It had been known to us all that he could not continue much longer with us. He had been nearly unable to work for several years, and only an occasional short poem came from his pen. His death, therefore, was not unexpected; but the beauty of his life and the great good which he had done caused his departure, when it came, to bring with it a universal sense of grief. Good and great men, of his type, are so rare that their death always leaves a void which is not soon filled.

Whittier's life and work constitute an essential part of the best side of the century now closing, a century which has seen moral changes of a type never before witnessed in history. He was one of the small company of men who had the spiritual insight, the intellectual force and the moral courage to see instinctively what was evil and to attack it with all the strength of his being, simply because it was evil and ought not therefore to exist. The great names with which his is rightly and unavoidably associated will come spontaneously to the minds of all readers. When he "left the muses' haunts, to turn the crank of an opinion mill," to use his own language, he was simply doing what every really true man must do, viz., consecrating himself, talent and all, to the service of his fellowmen, in a brave effort to drive out the wrong and to build up the right. His nature was also essentially prophetic. He saw that the good must ultimately triumph, and hence was hopeful of the future. This certainty of a purer and better time to come made him doubly strong in the dark and gloomy battle into the thickest of which he plunged in his early manhood. And his prophet's vision has been so largely realized. How different this decade from that when he bit his lips with silent indignation as he stood beneath the liberty-crowned dome of the capitol at Washington and gazed down on the slave-pens in the city below.

Whittier was a universal reformer. He had a heart for every good cause. He was not like many good men who can see only one principle of progress, and give themselves to that, even to the detriment of others equally

important. He hated slavery with an unsparing hatred, but he hated also every form of oppression and tyranny. He therefore espoused the temperance cause, the woman's cause, the peace cause, and whatever other phase of reform he saw tending to make men and nations freer and better. He loved all men as he hated all wrong. His hot indignation at iniquity and cruelty did not remove from his heart a tender love for all his fellow men, even the most wicked and depraved, a charity which "believeth all things" and which "covers a multitude of sins." One wonders sometimes how such moral fervor, such sincere and intense indignation against wrong could have coexisted with such simple and unbounded tenderness towards all the weak and erring. But was it not just in that that his moral perfection consisted? Though the forms in which he sometimes stated his tenets to his head may not have been entirely correct, his heart was surely not astray. His sympathy and gentleness, coupled with a natural modesty which he retained in its native simplicity, even in the midst of his greatest popularity, caused him to be loved by everybody, as he was admired by all for his other gifts. No poet was ever more entwined in the affections of the people than he.

Of his work as a poet, it is not in place here to say much. But we can not understand on what conceivable grounds certain English papers have said that he was no true poet at all, ranking him with certain English rhymesters whose names are scarcely known even to Englishmen themselves. The proofs that he was a poet of nearly the highest order, though he did not give himself as much as some to the intricacies of versification, are not far to seek. The people, the general mass of well cultivated people whose instincts in such things are not apt to be far wrong, thought him a poet, and read his works as they appeared, with eagerness and pleasure. His poetry moved in that range of subjects where true poets always find their inspiration and their best success. The better publishers thought him a genuine poet, and single small poems of his brought as large sums as were ever paid for the same kind of work. But the chief proof of his poetic genius is the fact that he moved in the highest poet-circle of the century and was ranked by these poets themselves as one of their company. There are passages in his poems that are unsurpassed from any point of view, and will doubtless be quoted and studied as long as the English language is known.

Only a word need be said of his peace sentiments. He was primarily a peace man because he was born a Friend, but secondarily and more essentially because his moral conceptions of life and character, voluntarily and studiously adopted, were such as absolutely to exclude the awful deeds of war from his code of that which is morally permissible. He must be placed, in this regard, in the same class with John Bright and Jonathan Dymond. But this conception of war did not lessen his antagonism

to wrong and his wish and purpose to have it removed. He proved, as Wilberforce did, that there are other means quite as effective as the sword in overthrowing evils, and unaccompanied by the blood-guiltiness which the sword brings. He was a man of the highest order of courage, ready at any moment to sacrifice his life, if need be, in the cause of freedom and justice. He associated himself early with the great peace movement of this century and continued in active connection with it to the close of his life.

We bring to his memory our wreath of sincere respect and honor and lay it among those brought by multitudes from every quarter of the land.

### THE PEACE MOVEMENT.

We readily concede that it is difficult to estimate, with exactness, the breadth of development, the strength and influence of a movement carried on on a purely moral basis and seeking its ends through the enlightenment and transformation of public opinion. Such a movement is very likely to be wrongly estimated, especially by those who make up their verdict by giving almost exclusive attention to superficial appearances. In truth, history shows that a great cause, moving with gigantic strides, may be quite unknown, in its most essential features, to whole sections of society even when it is nearing the day of its final triumph.

What is the present status of the peace movement? What are the marks by which we may judge of its strength and calculate the probabilities of its success? We are led to make this reckoning by the doings of the Peace Congress recently held at Berne, which it was our privilege to attend and to a report of which we give up nearly the whole of our present issue.

The Peace Congress itself is only one of the phases by which the movement may be judged. It is, however, a very important one, when rightly viewed. It is no great thing, merely from the stand-point of numbers, that three hundred people should meet in a city like Berne, and spend five days in the discussion of questions in which they are mutually interested. What are three hundred people compared with fifteen hundred millions of the earth's population? It is not much wonder, looked at from this side, that the Peace Congress is the butt of wide-mouthed jest on the part of a certain portion of the press, which proposes base ball quarrels and other like things as fit objects for its attention. How are three hundred people, more or less important, to do away with the vast standing armies of Europe numbering many millions of men? The practical journalist, the statesman-politician smiles aloud at the absurdity of the thing and makes all sorts of derogatory remarks.

But these three hundred people are from more than a

dozen of the leading nations of the world. They represent the same ideas, which have, therefore, in some way gotten into the minds of persons of differing race, language and customs. They are men and women who can see farther than the boundary lines of their own country. They are not the only persons in these countries holding the same ideas. Many of them were new faces, never having been before seen in a Congress of Peace. They have been won to the cause by others, many of whom have been kept away this year, but who are in the profoundest sympathy with the movement which they have helped to father. They are intelligent men and women, able to speak and write about the ideas which have possessed them. They persist in holding conferences, and delivering addresses and writing articles and button-holing those with whom they are thrown in contact. They are men of conviction, of courage, as well as men of humanitarian feelings and kindly sympathies. The Peace Congress, therefore, stands for something much more important than the numbers present at its sittings.

In another way, this gathering represents perhaps two hundred peace societies, with an aggregate membership of many thousands, very many of whom can not get to the peace congresses, though deeply interested in the work. Most of these societies have sprung into existence within ten years and a number of them within two years, and their membership is from all classes of society. Besides these distinctively peace societies there are many organizations for other ends, as those for the promotion of the interests of labor and for temperance, which are putting themselves into active coöperation with the peace propaganda. This widens further the meaning of the work and the scope of its influence.

Two important features of the movement, more prominent this year at Berne than in any previous Congress, are the uprising among university young men and the peace work of women. There were at least a score of youngmen present this year from the colleges and universities of three or four of the leading nations of Europe, and during the Congress they laid the basis of an inter-collegiate peace association. A number of influential women took part in the proceedings this year, representing to a greater extent than heretofore the profound interest which the women of the world are taking in the cause. We had the privilege of presenting to the Congress the Salutation of the Peace Department of the W.C.T.U., and of mentioning the fact that at the time of the Chilean difficulty a protest against war was sent to Washington by this organization signed by 500,000 women. It is difficult to overestimate the meaning of this fact.

Less closely associated with the work of the Congress proper, but constituting one of the most encouraging features of the movement, is the attitude of a considerable portion of the press. A number of influential journals of the first rank in several countries have come out